

4. Implementation Process (See Flow Chart Page 8)

When a request for traffic calming is received, staff first determines whether a simpler procedure could be used, or whether the traffic problem is a traffic control issue, in which case it is forwarded to the Traffic Safety Committee. The Traffic Safety Committee will seek to resolve an identified traffic issue without embarking on the traffic calming process. During this decision process, the priority of the application will still be set by the original request date. See the section on staging below.

Multiple requests for locations on a street may be combined by staff into a single request for a street project. If staff determines that a project would be too large for the available budget, the project may be divided into increments if it is practical to do so. If a large project exceeds the budget and is not divisible, the project will be placed on the next Capital Improvement Plan request list for approval of budget from City Council. Staff will also seek outside funding for the project. See the funding section below.

4.1. Application / Petition

Receive request and determine eligibility and ranking.

Requests for traffic calming must be received from a neighborhood association or by a petition signed by 25 percent of the households in the area where action is requested. A household is defined as any owned or rented living unit with its own street address, regardless of how many people live in the unit. A traffic calming request may pertain to problems of speeding, volume, “cut-through” traffic, or accidents on residential streets.

After receiving a request, staff collects data required to determine if the minimum eligibility criteria are met. Requests that meet the minimum criteria are placed on a project list according to the date they were received. The date of receipt is either the date of postmark, the dispatch date of an e-mail message, or the received date hand-stamped on a hand-delivered request. If the minimum criteria are not met and, if the problem can be addressed through other means, the City will take the best corrective action.

Staff will begin work on traffic calming projects according to the project’s position in the project list and the staffing available. If a request involves an unusual accident history (as defined by six or more crashes, or one fatal crash, in the prior three consecutive years), the Traffic Safety Committee will examine this history and consider if the project should be moved up on the project list regardless of the date it was received and whether or not the speed and volume criteria have been satisfied

4.2. Study Phase

Determine impacted area and notify residents

Once staff is ready to work on a traffic calming request, the staff first determines the location or street segment(s) where traffic calming measures might be placed. Staff also

determines whether any cross streets or adjacent parallel streets might be affected by traffic calming actions that might be taken. This larger area, consisting of the traffic calmed street, cross streets and/or adjacent parallel streets, is termed the “impacted area”.

A letter is then sent to all households within the impacted area to notify residents that a project is beginning, to share the data gathered so far, and to ask if there are other traffic issues that should be addressed. Staff may add any new streets or segments to the project, based on the feedback obtained from this outreach. The standard 300 foot radius from the limits of the impacted area are also included in the public notification.

Collect Data

Traffic data, including speeds, volumes and accident history will be routinely collected for each traffic calming request. Additional data, possibly including a license plate survey to determine the extent of cut-through traffic, may need to be gathered at this point, depending on what other issues were raised in the initial interest survey.

Conduct Impacted Area Meeting.

Residents of the project area are notified of the first meeting of residents within the impacted area, the purpose of which is to introduce the project and to identify any other traffic issues that should be addressed. The impacts of various traffic calming measures on the provision of emergency services will be specifically discussed.

Volunteers are solicited to form a working group that will meet separately to begin development of one or more traffic calming plans to address issues on the primary streets. Staff may develop one or more traffic calming concepts for presentation at this first meeting. One or more working group meetings are convened to refine the original plans and/or develop ideas for new plans. The working group continues to meet until agreement is reached on a preferred plan and one or more alternatives.

Any potential plan involving the use of vertical traffic calming measures (speed humps, speed tables, raised crosswalks, raised intersections) will take into consideration the needs of any person living in the project area who has a disability as defined in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

4.3. Survey Phase

Mail plans to residents and hold second impacted area meeting.

The preferred plan and alternative(s), including traffic data developed by staff, are mailed to impacted area residents along with announcement of a meeting. Residents are asked to mail comments back to the City and/or attend the meeting. The plans are presented to residents at the meeting. Staff will attempt to include any modifications desired by residents. It is desirable for impacted area residents to reach consensus on the preferred plan by this point.

Conduct survey to determine if a trial should be implemented.

Staff prepares a survey for residents that describes the traffic calming measures proposed to be placed and asks if they would support undertaking a six-month trial. How the survey is conducted is determined by the type of traffic calming project. Because some traffic calming projects will not fit neatly into the following categories, staff might need to vary the survey procedure to best fit special cases.

For all simple local street projects that do not include street closures or diverters, only those households located on the traffic calmed street(s) will participate in the survey. If measures are proposed for intersections (e.g., traffic circles), households on the intersecting street up to one block in either direction will also be surveyed. For street system projects, complex projects, projects including street closures or diverters, and neighborhood studies, all impacted area households will be eligible to participate in the survey (i.e., residents of the street(s) plus any adjacent street(s) affected by traffic diversion).

One response is allowed per household, regardless of the number of people in the household. Non-resident property owners and households on other project area streets will not participate in the survey at this time. In order for a trial to be considered for approval, a simple majority (50+ percent) of survey responses must indicate support for the trial.

If alternative plans are included in the survey, the total support for all plans must be a simple majority, and the alternative with the most support will be considered for a trial. Based on the survey results, staff will decide if a trial can proceed. Staff prepares an environmental assessment to help assess impacts during the trial. City Council approval for a trial is required for these projects.

If the required resident support described above is not obtained, the procedure may either return to working group meeting to select another alternative and repeat the above procedure, or the process ends at this point.

4.4. Trial Phase

Approve Trial Installation

Staff prepares a report to the Planning Commission in order to request approval to conduct a trial of the traffic calming plan (including selection of the preferred alternative for the trial, if necessary). The entire impacted area is notified of the meeting. The Commission listens to public testimony and discusses the proposed trial. The recommendations of the Commission are then forwarded to the City Council for final approval. If the Council does not approve the trial, the procedure may either return to working group meeting to select another alternative and repeat the above procedure, or the process will end at this point.

Design, implement and conduct approved trial.

The detailed plan for the trial is designed and either City forces construct the trial installation or bids are solicited for construction. The design effort may need to be contracted out, in which case bids would also need to be solicited for the design work. Traffic data is gathered before the trial is implemented, and at or near the end of the trial. The typical trial period will be six months.

4.5. Permanent Installation

Evaluate trial results and hold third impacted area meeting.

After six months, staff evaluates the results of the trial plan. Residents of the impacted area are notified by mail of the trial results. An optional third project area meeting may be held at which the results of the trial are discussed. The trial installation will remain until the permanent measures are installed or the decision is to remove the measures.

If staff determines that the trial was clearly not successful (e.g., traffic diversion is excessive, substantial resident complaints, accidents, substantial delays to emergency services), the procedure would return to working group meetings to make modifications and repeat the above steps. If it appeared that modifications could not be developed that would resolve the problem(s), staff would recommend to the City Council that the trial be abandoned. Further information about removing traffic calming measures is included below.

Conduct survey of residents regarding results of trial.

Staff distributes a survey to determine if residents believe that the trial was successful and if the project should be considered for permanent installation. The survey area includes residents and property owners in the entire impacted area. In order for staff to consider recommending to the City Council that the project be approved for permanent installation, support must be indicated by a super majority (67+ percent) of survey responses from the same households as surveyed for the trial installation. If a larger impacted area is surveyed, 67+ percent of responses received from the traffic calmed street(s) is also required.

Review results of trial plan and decide on permanent installation.

Staff prepares a report to the Planning Commission on the outcome of the trial plan. If the trial was successful, staff prepares an environmental assessment of the proposed permanent installation. Residents and property owners of the project area are notified. If the minimum project area support is not obtained, or if the plan was clearly not successful, staff will recommend removal of the trial traffic calming plan.

The Commission listens to public testimony, discusses the project, and recommends to the City Council if the trial plan should be removed, modified or made permanent. Final approval rests with the City Council. If the Council does not approve proceeding with permanent installation of the traffic calming plan, the project ends at this point and the trial installation is removed, unless Council directs that the process return to select another alternative.

Design and implement permanent plan and conduct follow-up evaluation.

The permanent installation is designed and bids are solicited for construction. The design might also need to be contracted out, in which case bids would also need to be solicited for the design work. Meetings with residents may be needed for designs of permanent measures. City Council approval is required for consultant and construction contracts exceeding a certain amount. A follow-up evaluation of the effectiveness of the plan may be conducted up to three years after permanent installation.

4.6. Removal

Removal of a previously approved traffic calming plan, either of a trial before the trial period expires, or of a permanent installation after it is constructed, will require the same process be followed that was used to install the plan initially. This means that a constructed improvement will require 67+ percent of impacted area household to approve the removal.

Traffic calming measures may also be subject to removal at either the trial or permanent stages for various reasons, including conformity with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), impacts on emergency services, accident problems, or safety problems determined by the Traffic Safety Committee. Depending on severity, all or a part of a traffic calming plan may be removed at the direction of staff for these reasons.

If traffic calming measures conflict with access to new development, it will be the responsibility of the developer to modify, relocate or remove the traffic calming measures. Removal should be a last resort, and a replacement public benefit will be required if traffic calming measures are removed.

4.7. Staging

Traffic calming measures vary from simple to complex, and from inexpensive to very costly. In the implementation process for any plan, simple traffic calming measures will be tried first. When a plan is developed, stages of implementation will be included. Trial installations will show which levels work. After permanent installation, if the follow-up surveys show the initial stages are not adequate, additional stages will be added, first as trial, then as permanent, according to the above process. The priority of all stages of a plan will date back to the original request.